

Message Text

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21

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 498

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INFO USMISSIN GENEVA

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L Leningrad 0471

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AMED, OSCI, UR, US

SUBJECT: GIARDIASIS AND Leningrad TOURISM

REF: MOSCOW 7567

GENEVA FOR DR. S. PAUL EHRLICH JR. (USDEL TO WHO)

1. ONE OF FIRST SUBJECTS WHICH ARISES WITH VISITING AMERICANS IS WHETHER Leningrad WATER IS UNSAFE TO DRINK. TWO RECENT GUESTS OF CONGEN BROUGHT 5 QUARTS OF WATER EACH IN PLASTIC BOTTLES FROM WASHINGTON FOR DRINKING AND BRUSHING TEETH. MANY TOURISTS HAVE BROUGHT ELECTRICAL IMMERSION HEATERS BUT FEW OF THEM REALIZE THAT WATER MUST BE BOILED FOR 20 MINUTES BEFORE BACTERIA ARE KILLED. THERE ALSO OF COURSE ARE OTHER HAZARDS. ONE AMERICAN MOST RECENTLY LEFT IMMERSION HEATER PLUGGED IN AS HE LEFT FOR AN EXCURSION, CAUSING CONSIDERABLE COMMOTION AT YEVROPAISKAYA HOTEL.

2. OF SOME 60 ODD PRESENT AND PAST CONGEN STAFF AND DEPENDENTS (INCLUDING SEVERAL RELAYS OF SEABEES) THERE HAVE BEEN ONLY 6 CASES OF GIARDIASIS KNOWN TO US. TWO OF THESE OCCURRED WITH STAFF MEMBERS WHO DRINK ONLY BOILED WATER. CONGEN AND FAMILY
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AND SCOSSES HOUSE GUESTS, WHO DRINK UNBOILED TAP WATER, HAVE YET TO EXPERIENCE SINGLE CASE OF GIARDIASIS.

3. LOCAL POLYCLINIC DOCTORS HAVE ADVISED US INFORMALLY THAT IT WELL KNOWN THAT GIARDIASIS IS ENDMIC IN THIS AREA BUT IT IS CARRIED NOT BY WATER SYSTEM BUT BY RAW VEGETABLES AND FRUITS.

4. INASMUCH AS WE ARE ON THE FRONT LINE OF FIRE ON THIS QUESTION, THIS POST WOULD WARMLY WELCOME VISIT BY AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH SPECIALISTS TO DISCUSS QUESTION WITH SOVIET COUNTERPARTS AND TO MAKE TESTS AS SUGGESTED PARAGRAPH 12 OF REFTEL.
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